Novel Extensions for

*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

“First of all,” he [Atticus] said, “if you can learn a simple trick,

Scout, you’ll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You

never really understand a person until you consider things from his

point of view--”

“Sir?”

“—until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.” (p.33)

1. Select a photo of a pair of shoes (from the internet or a catalog) for one of the main characters in the novel. Bring the photo or the real thing to class. The shoes you select should reflect a character who intrigues you for one reason or another.

As your chosen character and in your character’s voice, write a journal entry that he/she would write the day after the trial’s verdict is revealed. What is your character’s perspective?

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“You can’t do that [be truant], Scout,” Atticus said. Sometimes

it’s better to bend the law a little in special cases. In your case the

law is rigid. So to school you must go.” (also p. 33)

2. What do you think of the final outcome in the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*? How does this quote from early in the book play at the end of the novel for you?

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1. Is Atticus Finch a hero? If so, in which ways does he exhibit the

characteristics we would wish/expect to see in a hero? If he is not a hero, which character flaws does he possess or which traits in him are lacking to make him hero-worthy? Consider the time and place of the novel when you explore your answer. Are there ‘universals’ in the definition of a hero?

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1. This book won the Pulitzer Prize (1960) and was made into a

popular movie (1962) starring Gregory Peck who won the Best.

Actor Award for his portrayal of Atticus Finch.

Watch the classic movie *To Kill a Mockingbird* (2 hrs. 10 min.)

and note the differences, big and small. Did the movie do justice

to the book, or did it shortchange the novel? (A simple Google

search, will take you to a movie trailer to help you decide.)

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5. Who is Harper Lee (1926 - )? In which ways is this book autobiographical? How did she incorporate ‘current events’ of the time into her one and only novel? If you could travel to Alabama (halfway between Montgomery and Mobile, to Monroeville) and have a conversation with the author, what meaningful question would you have for her?

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Novel Extensions for

*Mississippi Trial, 1955* by Chris Crowe

1. As Hiram, write an ‘anonymous’ letter to Sheriff Smith encouraging him to investigate the sale of Grandpa’s truck and its involvement in a crime. Who do you have to convince?
2. Complete the *Psychological Character Profile* graphic organizerfor Grandpa Hillburn. Look carefully at Chapter 9 and Grandpa’s opinion of folk (p. 95). In Chapter 11 look at Grandpa’s interpretation of “political stuff” (p. 124) and the editorial *A Just Appraisal* (p. 127). These might help you understand him better.
3. Does Hiram have good cause to suspect R.C. Rydell in the crime involving Emmett Till? What evidence in the novel besides R.C.’s own words, would make him capable of this crime in Hiram’s eyes? Is Hiram justified in thinking the way he does?
4. Conduct further research on the Emmett Till case using leads the author provides (*The Greenwood Commonwealth* newspaper dated August 31, 1955 (p.121); *Look Magazine* November, 1955) and others you find independently in the library. Write your own account of events as an article or a news presentation.
5. Both Naomi (p. 143-144) and Mr. Paul (p. 149 – 152; p. 220 - 221) try to give Hiram advice. What does Hiram come to realize about the South through them?
6. Is ‘mimicry’ in art a form of flattery, or a lack of originality?

Are there specific advantages and/or disadvantages?

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